UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/393
S/1997/746
25 September 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
Agenda item 61
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 24 September 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 22 September 1997, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Letter dated 22 September 1997 from Mr. Aytuğ Plümer addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 8 September 1997 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations, which was circulated as document A/51/972-S/1997/699 of 9 September 1997.

At the outset, I wish to remind the Greek Cypriot representative who depicts north Cyprus as an "illegal entity" or "occupied" areas that the only occupation in Cyprus is the 34-year-old usurpation and continued occupation by the Greek Cypriot side of the seat of Government of the bi-communal Republic of Cyprus established under international treaties in 1960. Thus the usurper Greek Cypriot administration or its representatives have no right to question the legality of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, as an independent State, which was established through the free and democratic will of the Turkish Cypriot people.

As regards the allegations concerning the sale or lease of immovable property in the north, I wish to recall that previous similar allegations were dealt with in our previous communication dated 13 May 1997 addressed to you (A/51/902-S/1997/375, annex, of 16 May 1997). It should be emphasized here once again that the sale or lease of immovable property in the north is totally within the authority and jurisdiction of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in accordance with the relevant legislation currently in force. It should also be pointed out here that the Greek Cypriot administration is currently allowing the use, development and even transfer of Turkish Cypriot properties in the south. The relevant legislation enacted by the Greek Cypriot administration over the years for the utilization of Turkish Cypriot immovable properties (law No. 139/1991), includes provisions for the issuance of ownership certificates to Greek Cypriot citizens for houses built on Turkish Cypriot properties in the south.

In this connection, the reports appearing in the Greek Cypriot press of 9, 13 and 15 September 1997 are noteworthy. It is reported that the Greek Cypriot administration intends to continue to nationalize the Turkish Cypriot properties in the south on which houses have been built for Greek Cypriots, and that the Turkish Cypriot properties in question amount to 4,653 plots of land throughout south Cyprus (Greek Cypriot daily Filelefttheros, 9 September 1997). The Greek Cypriot daily Haravgi, 9 September 1997 has reported that the Greek Cypriot administration "is issuing title deeds to those who have themselves financed the construction of their houses. Almost half of all housing in question has been built on Turkish Cypriot properties. It is estimated that out of a total of 12,000 houses built for Greek Cypriots, 5,000 are located on Turkish Cypriot properties."

Amidst the controversy prevailing in south Cyprus on the matter of issuing title deeds as such, the Greek Cypriot leader, Mr. Glafcos Clerides, is reported to have confirmed that title deeds would be continued to be issued to Greek

Cypriots in accordance with the decision taken by the Greek Cypriots Council of Ministers. It is reported that in addition to those who have already received title deeds, 500 eligible Greek Cypriots will soon be issued with title deeds for houses built on Turkish Cypriot properties (Agon, 13 and 15 September 1997).

The issue of abandoned property, which is common to both communities, is a subject to be taken up and finalized between the two sides at the intercommunal talks within the framework of a bi-communal, bi-zonal settlement. The foundations of such a settlement have been laid by the population exchange agreement reached between the two sides at Vienna on 2 August 1975, which was implemented under United Nations supervision in September 1975. The parameters within which reciprocal property claims by both sides can be settled are outlined in the United Nations set of ideas of 1992, which envisages a global solution to this issue through property exchange and/or compensation.

The continued exploitation of this issue by the Greek Cypriot side for propaganda purposes clearly shows that it is not interested in a fair and realistic solution based on bi-zonality, bi-communality and the political equality of the two sides. Such harmful propaganda, aimed at misleading world public opinion on the Cyprus question, is further proof that the Greek Cypriot side intends to maintain its rejectionist stance on the basic parameters of a settlement between the two sides in Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLÜMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus